SHADOWSTEPPER
DESIGN DOCUMENT

By MikaMellow – For the 2024 Pirate Software Game Jam 15

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Game Summary Pitch

Shadowstepper is a 2D top-down combat-based game where you play as the Shadowstepper and are tasked with the mission of defeating the Angel of Light.

Use your gun to shoot elemental bullets. Shooting your elemental bullet with another elemental bullet combines them and creates an even more powerful attack with unique effects!

Hide in the shadows to avoid the Angel's attacks and to load your gun with different elements.

The Angel will adapt to your arsenal. The only way to beat the Angel is to use different elemental combinations.

1.2 Inspiration

1.2.1 Elemental World – Adventure

Elemental World – Adventure's gameplay loop consists of obtaining elements throughout an endless randomized dungeon to fight enemies. Each element can be used independently or together with another element to create unique attacks with unique effects.
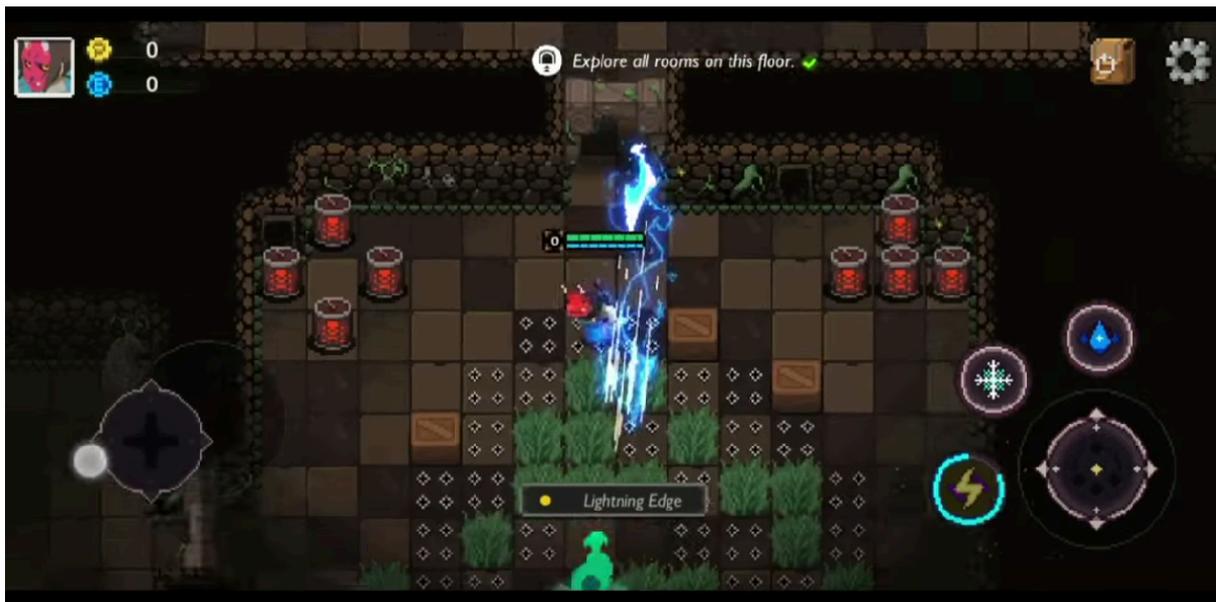
I want to replicate this kind of combat system that gives the player a wide range of abilities revolved around the combination of elements.

1.2.2 Jujutsu Kaisen – 10 Shadows Technique

The 10 Shadows Technique from Jujutsu Kaisen embodies both the concept of shadows and alchemy (via the combination of different attacks).

This ability lets the user hide in the shadows for surprise attacks and lets them store weapons within their own shadows.

10 Shadows user coming out of their opponent's shadows.

10 Shadows user retrieving weapons stored in their shadow.

This ability also grants the user access to 10 shikigami (animal summons made from their shadows) with their own unique abilities. The user is able to combine their shikigami to boost their power as well.

10 Shadows user summoning a dog shikigami.

Combined shikigami made up of multiple of the 10 Shadows user's shikigami.

Watching a 10 Shadows user creates a sense of satisfaction as they are constantly outsmarting their opponents through the applications of their large movepool.

The goal is to recreate this sensation while playing the game. The player will need to have a simple yet diverse moveset with an enemy that pushes the player to think creatively.

2 Concept

2.1 Gameplay Overview

Hunt down the Angel of Light using the Shadowstepper's abilities.

Equip your gun with 3 elements. Fire each element out as elemental orbs that will do damage upon contact. Shooting an orb with another orb of a different element creates a new attack depending on the combination.

Hide in the shadows to avoid attacks and change your equipped elements stored in your gun. However, stay in the shadows for too long and you may run out of breath, causing you to start taking damage. The enemy may also force you to come out of the shadows with certain attacks. Get hit with said attacks in the shadows and you will take double the damage.

The Angel of Light will adapt to your attacks, gaining resistance against certain elements while exposing weakness towards others. Figure out what elements it is resistant and weak to on the fly and adjust your arsenal accordingly.

2.2 Theme Implementation

Implement the theme of "Shadows and Alchemy" into a balanced power system that forces the user to adapt their arsenal to their enemy.

2.3 Primary Mechanics

❖ Your main weapons are:

    ⬜ A gun that can fire elemental orbs

    ⬜ Your ability to hide in shadows

❖ Elemental Gun

    ⬜ Collect elements throughout your gameplay

    ⬜ Load your gun with up to 3 elements

    ⬜ Shoot elemental orbs that will do damage on contact

    ⬜ Shooting an existing elemental orb with another orb of a different element will combine them, creating a unique attack

❖ Shadows

    ⬜ Hide in the shadows to avoid certain attacks

    ⬜ Hide in the shadows to open your inventory of elements

    ⬜ Load your gun with different elements in different orders

    ⬜ Taking note of your breath meter and the enemy's attacks while adjusting your strategy

2.4 Secondary Mechanics

❖ Increasing complexity of mechanics

    ⬜ Each time you defeat the angel of light, you are rewarded with a choice of 1 of 3 cards. Each card provides 1 of the following:

- New elements

- Elemental boosts

❖ Increasing difficulty

- The enemy will have different attack patterns.

- The enemy will enter a rage state after its hp reaches lower than 50%.

  - Increased attack frequency

  - Enhanced attacks

- The enemy's health will increase each time you beat a level.

- Every level, the enemy will have different elemental weaknesses and resistances.

3 Art

3.1 Theme Interpretation

❖ Stylized and simple art

❖ Simple animations that are easy to interpret (e.g., a dodge animation should be obvious to the player that you are dodging), so that the player can read the opponent and act accordingly.

3.2 Design

3.2.1 General game art

Similar in look to games like Elemental World – Adventure and Soul Knight. Pixel art assets that are easy to keep track of when playing.
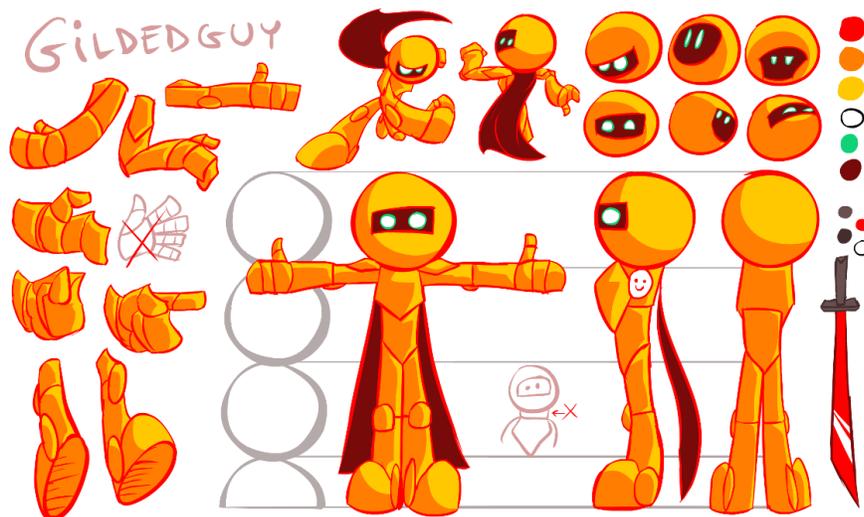
Elemental World – Adventure:
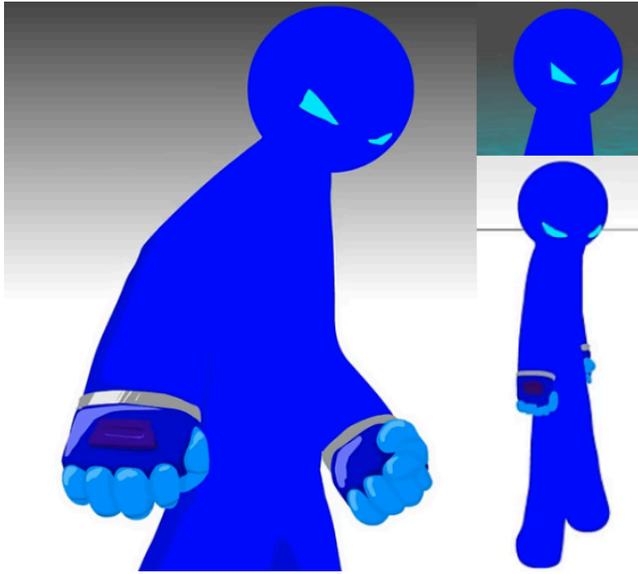
Soul Knight:

3.2.2 Character design

Simple characters with more focus on 1 or 2 recognizable key features. I am thinking of something similar to Stick Figure characters like GildedGuy, Oxob and Bog.

GildedGuy:

Oxob:

Bog:

3.2.3 UI design

Again, drawing inspiration from the above-mentioned games, Elemental World – Dungeon, Soul Knight and other pixel art, top-down, 2D dungeon crawler games. Simple UI that is easy to understand while playing.

4 Audio

4.1 Music

Catchy music that isn't too distracting to the player. I will most likely be using royalty-free music from sites like Zapsplat.

4.2 Sound Effects

8-bit sound effects. I will most likely be sourcing royalty-free sound effects from sites like Zapsplat.

5 Game Experience

5.1 User Interface

❖ Simple and small user interface – can be seen from your peripheral and easy to understand

  ▢ Out of shadows:

  ▪ Hp bar

  ▪ Weapon + equipped elements

  ▢ Within shadows:

  ▪ Breath meter – determines how long you can remain in shadows

  ▪ Element inventory + equipped elements

5.2 Controls

❖ WASD – movement

❖ Left-click – shoot

❖ Right-click – swap order of elements

❖ Spacebar – enter/exit shadows

❖ E – interact

❖ R – reload

6 Development Timeline

6.1 Minimum Viable Product

❖ Basic gameplay loop

❖ Functional gameplay mechanics

❖ At least 5 levels

   ▢ 5 variations of boss fight

   ▢ Enough upgrades to last 5 levels with varied replayability

6.2 Beyond (If ahead of schedule)

❖ Smarter and more complex enemy

❖ More elements

❖ Better upgrades for player

❖ More Lore

❖ Better art assets – poster images, menu screens and character art